mous letter of denunciation reaches the Ministry concerning a commercial or industrial firm. This is immediately followed by a close investigation of the firm's books. Though no trace of contraband may have been found, yet rumours of high fines to be imposed on this firm get into circulation. Its owners make desperate efforts to dissipate them. The firm's bank announces that its overdraft will be suspended until the matter is cleared up. The merchant who cannot wait for a judicial examination of the charge brought against him, nor engage in protracted discussions with the Ministry, finding his credit at the bank has been suspended, endeavours to strike a bargain. He will offer 10%, occasionally even only 1% of the amount of the fine with which he has been threatened. The State pockets 80% of the sum thus offered and the zealous inspector who has "discovered" the reported contraband appropriates the remaining 20%. Why should these sums indeed be rejected? Such tactics, when employed by a clever functionary or inspector, will soon allow him to become the owner of palaces and buildings in the capital. Such is the just reward of labour!"

And in conclusion the "Lupta" advises the Ministry of Finance as to the measures it ought to take to prevent merchants from suffering unduly from the blackmailing activities of its financial inspectors!

That blackmailing and extortion are not unusual practices may be inferred from the following announcement appearing in a Bucarest daily on 15th March, 1929:—"The tribunal of Cluj having received an endless number of complaints and denunciations against Lieut.-Colonel Mihai, of the gendarmery, lately occupying the post of Police-Prefect at Cluj during the Liberal régime, has transmitted them to the judicial procurator. The investigations which are being pursued prove that the charges are well founded and that this Liberal terrorist had extorted moneys through blackmail from high class people while he was police prefect in the capital of Transylvania. Those who suffered most from the exercise of the functions of the accused (sic), were merchants, who, if they failed to deliver to the prefect the sums or goods demanded, were subjected to tortures and heavy fines and were threatened with the closing of their

shops and the confiscation of their goods." The most sensational administrative affair in Rumania was undoubtedly that of the prison scandals of 1926, which gave rise to lively press comments throughout the continent and thanks to which the author of these scandals won widespread notoriety.

The following details concerning the methods in vogue in penitentiaries were given by the Bucarest "Socialismul" on May 16, 1926, on the occasion of the reported arrest of the notorious Cernat. . . . . "Directors and warders, seeking to grow rich rapidly, divide among themselves the moneys destined for the prisons. They appropriate both the food and the clothing set apart for those under arrest, they extort money from those better off, receive bribes in exchange for privileges, or force prisoners to work for them. The arrest of Major Cernat, who was appointed Director-General of Prisons while awaiting his appointment as Chief of the State Police Service, is no satisfaction for us. For we know that this man will be as well off in prison as at his home. We know further that in a few weeks or in a few months he will walk out free, with his head erect, for in our well-ordained country a big swindler has never been condemned or imprisoned, indeed it would be a crying injustice were such a thing to happen, since all our rulers have made their fortunes by similar dishonest practices."

The "Aurora" of June 3rd, 1926, reported the arrest of the directors of the penitentiaries of Doftana and Galatz, and gave details concerning the sums embezzled by these worthies. The system of imprisonment inaugurated by these clever rogues, however, deserves being enlarged upon as it is both amusing and illuminating. The following lucid and jocund report appeared in the French newspaper "Paris-Midi" on 17th June, 1926:—

"The Thousand and one joys of Rumanian Prisons."

"Bucarest. June 17th. Major Cernat, Director-General of Rumanian prisons, as well as the directors of several other penitentiary establishments, have been arrested. They are accused of failing to carry out their duties and of having shown too great indulgence towards the prisoners. Bucarest newspapers publish astounding details following on the

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inquiry ordered last week throughout all the prisons of the kingdom by the Minister of the Interior.

Galatz, the paradise of prisoners.

The most typical example of these queer Rumanian prisons in which incarceration is only relative, is Galatz.

Prisoners had the possibility of communicating with the outside world on payment of a small sum, but if a larger bribe was given to the Director, which in justice was more important for the wealthier prisoners, permission could be obtained to leave the prison so that urgent affairs might be attended to. When an even larger gratification was forthcoming, the administration would benevolently overlook even an absence of several days. One of the prisoners who had been able to win the goodwill of the penitentiary staff lived practically in freedom in a room he had hired in town. He was tactful enough to turn up at times and spend an hour in prison chatting with the warders so that his presence might be recorded. Another inmate of the establishment, on whom the severity of the law had imposed a sojourn of five years, made use of such persuasive arguments that he was able solemnly to celebrate his marriage in the cathedral of that town and peacefully enjoy his honeymoon. So far as the small fry were concerned, on whom weighed sentences of a few months, they figured nominally only on the registers of the prison.

The pretty servants of the compassionate Director.

The judicial authorities had already protested against Dr Cocea's behaviour, but such sanctions as had been ordered were never applied, owing to Major Cernat's intervention on behalf of this tender-hearted official. A curious figure indeed, this Dr Cocea, who had no scruples for old-fashioned conventions ! The judicial inquiry established that in the prison, the rigours of which he knew so well how to mitigate, this Director had engaged some young girl servants of exceptional beauty, whose only business consisted in setting off by their presence and graceful deportment the brilliant charm of the parties fines to which he invited the distinguished guests who were in his custody. But alas ! implacable Jus-

691 tice could not comprehend this 'artist of the grand style,'
— who obviously stood above common-place regulations!"
671 Disrespect for the law is pretty general in [illegible] circles in Rumania, for there are two weights and measures, and it is only the lowly who are made to feel the heavy hand of the law when it strikes them. This is due to the reciprocal toleration among the political parties of legal infractions which "de facto" have abrogated ministerial responsibility.

In fact peculation and misappropriation of funds are considered as mere peccadilloes. Interference in this practice is strongly resented, thus, in 1927, when one of the regents, the Patriarch Miron Christea, evinced a desire to investigate into the stewardship of the Minister of the Interior strongly suspected of having misappropriated several million lei, he was severely reproved and given to understand that it was no business of his.

Commenting on the utter disregard of law by politicians, the "Argus" of March 3rd, 1929, wrote:—

"A real new era, a true revolution in our spirit and our customs as well as in our public life will dawn only on the day when penal responsibility for illegalities, abuses and frauds committed by our rulers will be enforced as provided in the Constitution and the special law of 1879. The threat of penalties will constitute the most effective check on the abusive use of authority and the personal dishonesty of partisans."

As a check to the frauds perpetrated, a bill was submitted to the Chamber in April, 1932 providing for the control of fortunes of functionaries and other State dignitaries. Fears were expressed in the Press, however, that such a bill would never be passed and that eventually it would either be emasculated by the Chamber, or rejected by the Senate. The inspirer of this proposal was M. Mihalache; his party, however, had showed no haste to pass such a bill into law while it was in office.

000 In such an environment, integrity and good faith are finally discarded, for they are taken as tokens of mental dullness, while such respect as may still subsist is transformed into servility. The absence of higher spiritual ideals leads to a craving for more material enjoyments and the latter to an

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C69 738 733 by reason of them outrage and blows and threats and imprisonment and, it may be, destitution. These things truly mean glorifying the Lord Jesus. They will prove that we desire to insure for ourselves, even in this day of passing suffering, an eternal meed of renown which will be beyond weight or measure.

• [697] 466 The men who signed this Letter all have witnessed to the faith they thus professed. And in their company stand devoid of eloquence but not of holiness and fidelity, the many, many thousands, chosen from amidst the humble and the poor, who have suffered persecution and enslavement in Vhalitza or in the region between the Danube and the Black Sea. In order that we may understand their ordeal, let me quote from eye-witness accounts of the camps built to house those who toil at digging a canal in the Dobrouja:

> Approximately 30,000 prisoners are stationed there. The majority of them are intellectuals. They are digging a canal between the Danube and the Black Sea, or are building roads, bridges, and so forth. Practically all the work is done by hand in the same manner and with the same methods as those which were employed for the erection of the Egyptian pyramids. The food is very poor. As a rule, the daily menu consists of corn meal with a soup made of onions or beans. The sanitary conditions are indescribable, and for this reason the death toll is extremely high. Prisoners work more than twelve hours a day. Some of them were sentenced by the courts. Others were not. But this makes no difference, for even those who did receive sentences are not released when their terms are over.

000 The Uniate Churches are not among the great religious bodies of the world. But we might well pause in reverence while passing their temples of worship to commemorate those who in far-off countries have so nobly and sacrificially clung to their faith. Such a tribute would by no means preclude one from bearing in mind that others, too, have felt the crushing weight of Ru-